be vain-glorious, have, after all, very deep or comprehensive views of the character of the Deity. We laugh at the narrow and superstitious views entertained of God by savage nations, and in the darker ages of the history of the world; but perhaps we might be as profitably employed in inquiring whether we have ourselves attained to ideas that are correct and adequate.

In this, or indeed in any age, there are comparatively few disposed absolutely to deny the existence of a superior or a supreme Being. We would not say that the idea of, and belief in, the existence of God are innate in, or connate with, the human soul; but they are the natural result of the exercise of the human faculties and intuitions in the circumstances in which man is placed. Degraded though man be, he shrinks from Atheism with almost as strong an aversion as he does from annihilation.

Mankind cannot be brought to believe, that there are not traces in the world of something higher than blind fate and the freaks of chance. Their felt weakness, their very pride, cannot brook the thought of there being no presiding power to overlook their destiny. There are, besides, certain periods of helplessness in every man's life, when the soothing accents of human affection cannot be found, or, what is worse, can afford no comfort; and then the heart, whatever may be the sophistries with which the head is warped, will insist on believing that there is a God who sympathizes with us and pities us. Rather than abandon the thought that some Being above nature is interested in them, mankind will assume that the heavenly bodies have some mysterious communication with the earth; that the sun goes round the whole globe just to see their actions ; that there are planets presiding over their birth, and determining their life and death ; or they will people the woods and the darkness of night with spirits, and reckon the breezes their whispers of

communication
regarding us, and the storms the expression of their indignation
against those who have offended them. If for ever without a
companion, man would sometimes prefer an unpleasant one;
and, on a like principle, he would worship a god supposed to be
possessed of many hideous qualities, rather than be driven to
regard this universe as a blank arid uninhabited void.

But while man is led naturally to believe in God, he is not
led HO naturally to entertain just and spiritual conceptions of his
character. It is a fact, that almost all nations h*ave retained